those who formerly had been exceptionally lavish and unctuous in the King's praise—for instance, *The Times,* which belatedly discovered that his father's last days were clouded on his account, and, later, that *His Majesty's circle was too largely composed of men and women . . . who cared less for his welfare than for their amusements/

Between these two extremes, there was a great diversity of opinion—the romantically inclined who saw in the King one who must choose between love and a kingdom, and chose love; Socialists who saw in him an incipient Fascist leader, and other Socialists who held that he was being victimised for his proletarian sympathies; persons themselves in matrimonial difficulties whose hearts went out to a fellow-sufferer, and persons fearful of matrimonial difficulties whose hearts hardened against one who might by his example encourage a more lenient attitude towards divorce; the snobbish who, even though they might never have occasion to, could not bring themselves to envisage curtseying to Mrs. Simpson, and anti-snobs, fond of reciting Burns, who would welcome a Queen without rank's guinea stamp, and whose mother had once, it was said, taken in lodgers in Baltimore.

Out of this confusion rose Mr. Baldwin's voice, reassuring and confident, recounting all his dealings with the King, sometimes repeating the very words used:

*I am going to tell you something I have long wanted to tell you. I am going to marry Mrs. Simpson, and I am prepared to go.'

'Sir, that is most grievous news/

Perfect harmony had existed between them;

their friendship, far from being impaired, had been strengthened, was, indeed, a friendship of affection. Throughout, the King had behaved as a great gentleman, showing every consideration, and refusing to leave Fort Belvedere and come to Buckingham Palace, because of the cheering crowds he knew would greet him. Now the King had taken his decision to abdicate; freely taken it, without any constitutional issue arising. Let them all leave it at that. Let